

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE GUIDANCE



For transition from early years settings to school

In Monmouthshire, we are committed to ensuring that all children have the best possible start in life. Starting school is a key transition in a child's early life and, if we can get this process right, it can play a pivotal role in setting children up to succeed in the future. It takes time to prepare children, and to be prepared for children to move to a new school. One way to bring about a successful start for all children is to manage the transition process from early years settings to school in a proactive way.

This document has been developed with professionals from early years settings and schools. It includes suggestions for both settings and schools, to ensure the transition process runs smoothly and is a positive experience for all involved including children, parents and professionals. I would like to thank these professionals for their contribution to this work.

I hope that you find this information a useful tool to support and develop effective transition between early years settings and local primary schools.

Will McLean

Chief Officer Children and Young People
March 2024



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The starting point for transition is always the individual child. A sense of belonging to the new school community is an important contributor to how well children and families will adjust. Communication between parents/carers and professionals should inform the transition process.

Principles for effective transition

According to the Welsh Government Flying Start Guidance, transitions are of the highest quality when:

- Processes and procedures are supportive and inclusive.
- The child and their family is placed at the centre of transitions planning.
- Positive relationships are established and all adults who are involved with the child and family work closely together.
- Environments are welcoming, accessible and non-stigmatising.
- There is continuity in a child's care, development and learning.

Transitions should be a timely, planned process that meets the needs of individual children and reflects their rights, as set out in the United Nations Rights of the Child (UNCRC).



What does effective transition look like?

The transition process is unique for every school and is largely dependent on the number of feeder settings they have and whether these are co-located with schools.

Where schools have one main feeder setting that is based on the school site, there are lots of opportunities to enhance the transition process. Examples of effective practice already happening in schools in Monmouthshire include:

- The setting is invited to join the school for special assemblies throughout the year and for events such as sports day.
- Opportunities for settings to use the school's Forest School area.
- Opportunities for children to play on the school yard or outdoor area, either on their own or with the current Reception children.



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- Lunch in the school hall at least once a week for the second half of the summer term.
- The Reception teacher visits the setting regularly to read a story, so they become a familiar adult to the children. This also provides an opportunity for the teacher to get to know the children and to see them in a setting environment in which they are familiar and feel comfortable.
- Setting staff accompany small groups of children who are due to move up to school in September to spend time in the Reception class during the summer term. These groups are rotated so that each child has at least two opportunities to participate in these sessions.

If a school has more than one feeder setting and these settings are not situated on or near the school site, it may not be possible to facilitate all these activities. These schools should consider how they can enhance the transition process. For example:

- Children to be invited to attend a sport's day or special assembly accompanied by either setting staff or their parents.
- Reception teacher or teaching assistant to visit every child in their early years setting.
- Every child to be offered **at least** one transition morning or afternoon session in the Reception class during the summer term.

Early years settings should be preparing children for this transition by talking about school, reading stories and, if possible, showing

them photographs of the school. Settings that have children moving on to several schools also need to consider if there is anything they can do to support children through the transition process. One suggestion is to arrange children in social groups for some activities based on the schools they will be attending. This will give them the opportunity to build relationships with children that will be going to the same school as them.

Cluster transition meetings

The purpose of transition meetings between schools and settings is to share information on individual children and strategies/ approaches that have been effective. It is also an opportunity to build positive relationships and effective links between schools and settings. Despite the benefits, this can be time consuming, particularly when a school has multiple feeder settings. The idea behind cluster transition meetings is to facilitate this in a time effective way.

Once a year, in the first half of the summer term, a transition meeting will be arranged for all primary schools and settings in each cluster. These meetings will be hosted by one of the schools at the end of the school day. All schools will be expected to send a representative, ideally the teacher who will be teaching the Reception class the following September. Early years settings with children that have been allocated a place at one of these schools will also send a representative.



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Each school will have a desk where they will base themselves and settings will visit each of the schools to discuss any children that attend their setting currently and have been allocated a place at that particular school. The setting will share the child's One Page Profile and any pertinent information relating to the child. This may include initial assessments and progress made whilst in their setting. It is important that parents have given consent for this information to be shared so that settings are adhering to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Some settings may need to attend more than one of these meetings if they have children from different clusters.

Support for parents/carers

Parents/carers have an important role to play in the transition process. It is important to remember that some parents may have had a negative experience of school themselves and we want to do all we can to avoid them passing on these feelings to their children.

To reduce parental anxiety, schools should ensure that parents/carers are well informed, feel able to ask any questions and have their concerns addressed.

Some of the activities that all schools can offer to support parents/carers through the transition process are:

Information meeting for parents

Provide information on the school day, uniform, PE kit, arrangements for drop off and pick up and so on. Ensure parents are aware

of arrangements for the start of term as early as possible e.g. full or half days, alternating morning and afternoon sessions etc. If possible, offer parents a tour of the school.

Meet the class teacher

An opportunity for parents/carers to meet the teacher/staff that will be working with their children in Reception. Show them around the learning environment and provide examples of the experiences their child might participate in. It may also be helpful to discuss expectations and share ideas of activities parents can be doing at home to prepare their children for school.

Home visits

An opportunity to see the child in their home environment and to find out more about their interests and needs.

Day in the Life of Reception

School could produce books or videos that could be shared with children to prepare them for school; these could be sent to parents/carers and early years settings.

Self-Portraits

If the child hasn't attended a childcare setting, parents could be asked to complete a One Page Profile for their child with a photograph or self-portrait with important information to be shared with the school.

Parent meetings early in the autumn term

To discuss how children have settled in and give parents an opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

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Showcase session

Invite parents/carers into school once a term to see what their children have been doing.

Parental engagement activities

These could include autumn walks, cooking sessions, family literacy and craft etc.

Children with additional learning needs (ALN) or emerging needs

If a child has been identified as having Additional Learning Needs or emerging needs, it is most likely that they will have been supported by an Early Years ALN Advisory Teacher or an Educational Psychologist during their time in an early years setting. It is important that these children receive an enhanced transition between their early years setting and school.

As a minimum, the following should be in place:

- School entry planning meeting with parents, representatives from the school and the setting, and any professionals working with the child. (This meeting may be facilitated by a member of the Early Years ALN Team, but any notes will be taken and circulated by the school.)
- One Page Profile with targets, which have been reviewed by the setting.

You may also wish to consider ways in which the child can become more familiar with the adults they will work with and the spaces they will use, such as:

- Increased visits with/without parents, visits when the class/school are quiet.
- Photographs of the classroom, teacher, school hall and so on that can be sent home with the child to look at over the summer in preparation for their transition to school.

Documentation for transition

Effective information sharing might include exchange of the following documents / information:

- One Page Profile.
- Initial/Final Assessments (these may be in the form of a letter to the child)
- My PCP targets and reviews, if applicable (children with ALN, emerging needs).
- Risk assessments.
- Health care plans, if applicable.



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An example transition timeline

This is an **example** transition timeline and is in no way definitive. Monmouthshire early years settings and primary schools will have their own timelines, process and plans, but the timeline below can be adapted and utilised by schools and settings.

SUMMER TERM (prior to children moving on to school)	
Early May	Cluster transition meetings
May / June	Setting visits by school staff
May / June	Day in the Life of Reception book or video to be sent out
June	Information meeting for parents
June	Meet the class teacher
June / July	Home visits by school staff
June / July	Invite children to Sports Day or a special assembly
July	Transition sessions for children
AUTUMN TERM (after children have started in school)	
September / October	Parent meetings
October	Showcase sessions / parental engagement sessions

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Resources

The following resources may be helpful to support with the transition process:

- Assessment Guidance for Funded Non-Maintained Nursery Settings.

[Assessment arrangements for funded non-maintained nursery settings \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/assessment-arrangements-for-funded-non-maintained-nursery-settings)

- Curriculum for Funded Non-Maintained Nursery Settings.

[A curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/curriculum-for-funded-non-maintained-nursery-settings)

- Early Childhood Play, Learning & Care: Developmental Pathways 0 to 3.

[Early childhood play, learning and care: Developmental pathways 0 to 3 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/early-childhood-play-learning-and-care-developmental-pathways-0-to-3)

- Monmouthshire Toileting Policy Guidelines for Schools and Educational Settings can be used by schools or educational settings as the basis to construct their own policies which should then be ratified by the school's Governing Body or Committee annually.

[Download pdf here](#)

- Professional Learning Modules on Hwb including Transitions, Observation, Child Development, Outdoor Learning, Play and Play-Based Learning, Authentic and Purposeful Learning.

[Repository - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/repository-hwb)

Appendix 1: Support services

Monmouthshire Acorn Project free 'Getting Ready for School' course is suitable for parents/carers whose children are starting reception classes in September. The course consists of 2 sessions of 1.5 hours (run over 2 weeks) and can be delivered online or in schools. Contact parenting@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Monmouthshire Early Years and Parenting Support is able to provide multi agency support for 0-7 year olds such as Play Therapy, Circle of Security, support with toileting and parenting classes. Support can be requested using the referral form.

[Download pdf here](#)

